

Spark Gap

Vol. 32, Issue 3, March 2015 *MARC - Serving Central Indiana Communities for thirty-two years*

On Our MARC...

Only a few more days and spring will be here. Well, I'm hoping. March is severe weather preparedness month across the United States. With spring comes the possibility of storms and severe weather. Just a reminder, the Storm Spotter training is scheduled at the Arts Center at Franklin Community High School on March 25th. The class is 7 to 9 pm and is free to the public. You do not need to reserve your spot in advanced this year.

Everyone knows that we have our website, but do you also know that we have a Facebook page? Please check it out. Also check out our website as it has new postings almost every day. Our Website is www.midstatehams.org and the facebook page is facebook.com/MidStateARC. I'm sure Ron Schuetz would appreciate you joining the group.

Our new repeater has arrived. It will be install in the next day or so. Hopefully everything will go smoothly. I'm sure our Trustee will bring us up to speed at the monthly meeting.

Just a reminder that we are in a new year and time to get your dues current. If you haven't paid your dues for the year please see Cy at the meeting. Thanks to all of you who have paid your membership for 2015.

I would like to thank those who made it out for our Dinner Social on March 10. We all had a good time. Hope with warmer weather coming, more will join us at El Meson in Franklin in April.

Our April speaker will be Dave Arland, President of Arland Communications. Dave will be speaking about new technologies coming from the vantage point of the annual Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

See you Saturday and the coffee will be on.

Jacki-KI6QOG

President



MARCH BIRTHDAY WISHES TO:

KC9VGQ-Chris Mazzarella

KC9WLR-Mike Rose

KB9LOT-Dave Daily

KC9EBL-Brenda Haler

N9LC-Steve Brown

Yaesu System Fusion

Digital radio has come to Johnson County! On March 11th at 2110hrs Z, 5:10pm to most of us, the long awaited Yaesu DR-1X System Fusion repeater became active at the White River Township Fire Department tower location. Digital transmissions are now possible on the MARC 2M repeater.

Replacing the Kenwood repeater, the Yaesu system offers many features previously unavailable to our members. The most noticeable is the quality; perhaps I should say the “purity”, of the signal. Remember how FM radio signals improved the music quality over the AM signal? Yaesu System Fusion digital does the same thing. Signal quality reports are still coming in, but the most heard comment is “...absolutely no background noise.” Sure, this could be tested in extreme environments. And with good weather more drivers will have their windows down (finally) allowing wind, road and traffic noise to become part of the transmitted audio. The digital signal should blank most or all of that QRN/QRM. We will all be listening closely to the improved audio quality, making our individual judgment.

Briefly, a couple things will be readily apparent: There is NO courtesy tone at the end of each transmission. That function seems to have been overlooked by the Yaesu Engineers. You will hear a “squelch tail”. If you are at some distance from the repeater you should notice less noise on a received signal. The repeater output has increased from 25W to 50W. The ERP has not yet been calculated. But doubling the power is a 3dB gain punching the signal into the hard to reach town of Edinburgh and the recessed, hilly areas of Lamb and Princess Lakes.

The other quickly noticeable item is the loss of the badly needed “south tower” remote receive site. Weak signals from the southern parts of the county will experience difficulty getting back in to the repeater. That issue is being addressed and hopefully resolved soon.

A new audio component will be heard on this new digital system: that is the digital signal itself. The common analog radio (almost everybody's radio) will receive this and open the squelch. You will hear a continuous “rushing” sound. No warbles, clicks, pops or garbled audio; just a steady low level noise. The work around is here: The Yaesu repeater has been configured to transmit the same PL tone as the radio receive PL tone; 151.4Hz. In order to blank out the digital noise each user should configure their radio into the CTCSS mode. That's right: the operator's manual needs to be located and programming steps followed. Most LCD dials will display “CT” when done correctly. Use 151.4Hz for the tone. The user will continue to receive the analog audio from the repeater. The digital audio will be blocked. There will be more on this at the next MARC Club meeting. And if you cannot find your operators manual, they can usually be downloaded from the Internet by opening the manufacturers Web site. BE CAREFUL!! Some manual supply houses will charge you for the download. Go to the manufacturers Web site and look for support or manuals tabs.

Briefly that is the new Yaesu System Fusion repeater now in service.

This is new to all of us. We will all learn together. Some members already have a Yaesu mobile or handheld radio and are now enjoying the thrill of noise free communications. But you do not need a new Yaesu radio to continue to use the MARC repeater system. That is part of the beauty of this new digital system: it works with “the old analog” signal just fine.

- *Chris, KQ9Y*

The Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2015, House Resolution 1301.

5 FEB 2012 - 2340 CST

Before the snowstorm closed down Washington, DC today Representative Adam Kinzinger (R IL-16) dropped (registered) an ARRL proposed bill, The Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2015. It starts on its way with 12 co-sponsors. This is a considerably better start than we had last fall. It is now House Resolution 1301. I have not seen the text of HR-1301, but I have been informed the bill is the same as last year's version.

I am flying to Washington next Tuesday, March 10th, and will be recruiting co-sponsors for this house bill. I expect to also be helping recruit co-sponsors for a Senate version of HR-1301.

I ask those who recruited co-sponsors for last years bill, to thank last year's house co-sponsors and ask them to co-sponsor HR-1301. If you know amateur radio operators in other congressional districts, please urge them to recruit their federal representatives.

When the companion Senate Resolution is presented, I will be asking you to help me recruit your senators to be co-sponsors.

There will be news articles and recruiting suggestions posted on the ARRL web site.

I ask that as many as possible to take up the challenge of obtaining a federal statute that will require reasonable accommodation for amateur radio operators wanting to install exterior antennas on their home owner association (HOA) regulated residential properties.

- George R. Isely, W9GIG

This is a very important issue that will affect all HAMS throughout the United States. Please contact the congressional representative serving your area. Remember, they work for YOU.

Please send your comments to: Todd Young, Luke Messer and Andre Carson. Follow the link to the US House of Representatives: <http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/>

Indiana Radio Club Council Workshop



Rhonda is all ready for business at the workshop.

Several Mid-State ARC members participated in a half day *Building Stronger Clubs* workshop on March 7th. Attending were Ken KD9AMA, Rhonda WS9H, Steve N9DC, Bruce K9ICP, Sam WA9VBG, Joe KZ9H and Jack W8ISH. The Indiana Radio Club Council workshop focused on problems and solutions for boosting attendance at club meetings and public service events. Nearly two dozen hams from around the state offered ideas to solving club related problems. It was held at the Salvation Army Training Center on Georgetown Road.

Previous workshops recommended starting with the 4Fs. Every successful Amateur Radio activity needs Food, Fun, Frequencies and Fellowship. The group agreed that every Ham radio event needs a serving of food. Hams respond to food.

The fun comes from serving up interesting ham related guest speakers, building projects and demonstrations. Your club, like many, is made up of people with interesting backgrounds. The frequencies involve ARES or RACES activity, public service events and general discussion on Amateur Radio operations for local and DX.

And no meeting or event is complete without the fellowship that comes from being a part of the Amateur Radio community. Hams love to talk. Make time for fellowship. Long business discussions are a meeting killer. Our recommendations are to have your executive board and directors take care of business before the meeting. At the meeting, they can present a quick list of accomplishments to the club membership leaving more time for guest speakers and other projects.

The workshop discussed ways to publicize club meetings. Web sites, kept up to date, was at the top of the list followed by repeater chatter and voice announcements. Google Calendar is an excellent way to inform the club members. Bottom line, it takes a concerted effort to maintain the webpage, calendar, Newsletter and repeater discussions about upcoming events.

The idea for building better clubs is posted on the IRCC webpage. Look in www.inrcc.org for those results.

-Jack W8ISH

More Pictures from the Workshop.....



Joe, John and Doreen speak at the workshop.



Dave and Bruce listen and take notes.



Mark and Ken make sure nothing is missed.



Pictures by Jack Parker W8ISH



NWS Storm Spotter Training

March 25th, 2015 7:00pm EDT Franklin High School; Performing Arts Center

Franklin, IN (Johnson County)

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2015 Indiana Hamfests and Convention

03/28/2015 | 32nd Annual Columbus ARC 2015 Hamfest

Location: Columbus, IN

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Columbus Amateur Radio Club

Website: <http://carnet.net>

04/18/2015 | North Central Indiana Hamfest

Location: Peru, IN

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Kokomo ARC, Cass County ARC, Grant County ARC, & Miami County ARC

Website: <http://nci-hamfest.net>

07/11/2015 | Indianapolis Hamfest

Location: Indianapolis, IN

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Indianapolis Amateur Radio Association

Website: <http://www.indyhamfest.com>

11/14/2015 | Indiana State Convention (Fort Wayne Hamfest & Computer Expo)

Location: Fort Wayne, IN

Type: ARRL Convention pending Executive Committee approval

Sponsor: Allen County Amateur Radio Technical Society

Website: <http://www.fortwaynhamfest.com>

MID-STATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the THIRD SATURDAY of each month in the basement of the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, Indiana 46131.

See our website, www.midstatehams.org, for maps on how to get to our meeting.

Everyone is welcome; you do not have to be a HAM to attend our meetings or a member of the club.

WA9RDF
Repeater
146.835/
146.235 MHz
151.4 Hz PL Tone

Club Officers:
President: Jacki Frederick – KI6QOG
Vice President: Dave Daily – KB9LOT
Secretary: Rhonda Curtis- WS9H
Treasurer: Cy Young – N9CHY
Repeater Trustee - Chris Frederick – KQ9Y

Weekly Net: Sunday evening 7:00 PM ARES/RACES members and ALL RADIO AMATEURS

The Official Newsletter of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

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46131*

Editor: Robert LaGrange N9SIU

***Please send your articles to my email n9siu@yahoo.com
no later than the 3rd of the month***

